

President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief
Responses to Public Enquiries
Date Range: December 10, 2003 to February 23, 2004.

The Questions & Responses are consolidated for ease of reference. Please review the APS for detailed guidance.

Interested parties are strongly encouraged to register to receive automatic e-mail notification of any changes to the APS at <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/AID/OM/SOU/674-04-008/listing.html>.

I. Down Loading the APS:

Q1. I want to access a grant application form electronically for the PEPFAR initiative as described in the APS which has been printed in the media.

On the website I cannot download any application form, my attempts meet with the message that no grant opportunities with CFDA number 00000 (the info on the site) and opportunity number 674-04-008 (recorded on the site) have been published. I would very much like to know how I can access an application form.

A1. When you are on the www.fedgrants.gov website, rather than clicking on the button that says "Apply for Grant Electronically" please click on the link immediately above that, under where it says "Link to Full Announcement" then access the Annual Program Statement at the link on the left hand side of this page. The Annual Program Statement is the solicitation. Please read it carefully and pay close attention to what is specifically asked for in the Tier 1 Concept Paper on page 7 of the Annual Program Statement before submitting a concept paper of **not more than five pages**. We also recommend reading all of the FAQs and responses to public enquiries and other information at <http://pretoria.usembassy.gov/wwwh aids.html>.

Q2. Can you please clarify the difference between the APS and the Grant Opportunities: Initial Funding Mechanisms to Implement Critical Areas of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief? Are the Initial Funding Mechanisms the only areas that will get funded in response to the APS, or may an organization submit a proposal that complies with the APS, but does not necessarily fall within the four narrower funding mechanisms?

A2. There are several APSs and other solicitations related to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) with varying receipt dates. The APSs at these links will be funded centrally in the United States and require applicants to have a presence in more than one PEPFAR country:

1. HIV/AIDS Prevention Through Abstinence and Behavior Change for Youth
<http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/AID/OP/WAS/APS-M-OP-04-190/listing.html>
2. Support to Orphans and Vulnerable Children Affected with HIV
<http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/AID/OP/WAS/APS-M-OP-04-189/listing.html>
3. Rapid Expansion of Antiretroviral Therapy Programs for HIV- Infected Persons in Selected

Countries in Africa and the Caribbean Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-29894.htm>

4. a. Rapid Strengthening of Blood Transfusion Services in Selected Countries in Africa and the Caribbean for the Ministries of Health and National Transfusion Services Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-29891.htm>
- b. Providing Technical Assistance Support for the Rapid Strengthening of Blood Transfusion Services in Selected Countries in Africa and the Caribbean Under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief
<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2003/03-29892.htm>

Other funds will be allocated to the U.S. Mission in each of the fourteen countries to help meet the goals of PEPFAR. In South Africa, the Interagency APS for South Africa found at <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/AID/OM/SOU/674-04-008/listing.html> is being used to identify potential partners in South Africa in the areas of HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care. Any proposal that complies with the South Africa APS will be considered for funding under the South Africa APS.

II. Due Dates

Q1. Regarding the subject APS and the subsequent modification, please clarify whether the due date of December 31, 2003 is for a full-blown proposal or for a concept paper (with capacity statement and summary budget). Can you please clarify the due dates for concept papers?

A1. The initial due date of December 31, 2003 was only for concept papers. After review of the concept papers some applicants were invited to submit a full application. This is not the only deadline, it was simply the deadline for the first round of proposals. Additional concept papers will be welcomed every day until December 31, 2004. On a quarterly basis, the PEPFAR South Africa Task Force will review the concept papers that are received by the last day of each quarter (December 31, 2004; March 31, 2004; June 31, 2004; September 31, 2004; December 31, 2004) and begin the two-tiered evaluation process for each. The following chart summarizes receipt dates. Please note that full applications are to be submitted only upon invitation following the review of concept papers.

	Submit 5-page	Submit 30-page Proposal
Round 1	12/31/03 (closed)	March 1, 2004
Round 2	03/31/04	June 1, 2004
Round 3	06/30/04	September 1, 2004
Round 4	09/30/04	December 1, 2004

III. Submission of Concept Paper and Application

Q1. I am in the process of compiling a concept paper for submission to PEPFAR, and I have a few logistical questions. Does the five-page limit include separate attachments? What is the required font size for body text?

A1. Attachments are not considered part of the 5 page limit. The APS does not specify a font size.

Q2. Can you please tell me if an organization may submit more than one concept paper? A2. An organization may submit more than one concept paper.

Q3. I have been forwarded your announcement by the CDC. In collaboration with a community based organization and School of Medicine we had applied to evaluate an abstinence based curriculum delivered in public schools in Durban South Africa. The 3 year research application was approved but no funds were available at this time. Reviewing your announcement I am not sure that this project would fit although it addresses many of the prevention aims of the initiative. Could you please advise me how to proceed? I have attached the abstract of the application and would be more than happy to forward or send you a full copy.

A3. We cannot encourage or discourage your organization from applying. Abstinence-based prevention is an important element of PEPFAR. Please read the APS carefully and you will note it invites applications for service provision, not research.

Q4. I'm interested in applying for the PEPFAR grant. However, I have a few questions I'd like to ask first. Also, are there specific guidelines and forms for the application or are you just looking for a concept paper and letter at this point?

A4. There are two steps in the application process. First, applicants submit a five-page concept paper as explained in the APS. There is no official format required for the concept papers beyond what is laid out in the APS. The South Africa PEPFAR Task Force will review these and invite some applicants to submit a full formal 30-page proposal at a later time. As noted in Section II above, concept papers will be accepted anytime between now and December 31, 2004. Every quarter, the concept papers received in that quarter will be reviewed. The Task Force will begin its first review in early January of all concept papers postmarked on or before December 31, 2003. The other quarter review cut off dates are March 31, June 30, September 30 and December 31 of 2004.

Q5. Can we meet with USAID and CDC to discuss their activities in proposed project area?

A5. Applicants are encouraged to respond to the request to submit their applications in accordance with the guidelines provided in the APS. To assure all applicants have equal access to information

individual meetings with US government officials are not planned. Any meetings or briefing sessions that do occur will be transcribed and made available at the PEPFAR website.

Q6. Is my understanding correct that Institutions of Higher Education do not fit the eligibility criteria to receive PEPFAR grant support? This is funding which President Bush made available to support the provision of sustainable HIV/AIDS services in South Africa. If this is indeed so, can you direct me to other possible funding in USAID where South African Higher Educational Institutions can apply for HIV/AIDS related funding.

A6. There are several mechanisms available for parties interested in applying for support from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Interested parties will note that Institutions of Higher Education or affiliated non-governmental organizations may fit the criteria as applicants for some of these mechanisms. The APS may be amended to include Public Institutions of Higher Education. If that occurs such institutions may submit concept papers.

Q7. Please clarify if submission must be on 8.5x11 size paper or A4 size paper. Please confirm if a cover letter is allowed/ will be reviewed.

A7. The APS does not specify paper size. A cover letter is allowed and will not count in the five page limit for concept papers.

Q8. I have only recently become aware of the US government aid package to South Africa, the PEPFAR initiative. I have direct involvement in some projects related to Aids. I am in contact with several other projects, in some cases in an advisory capacity. I am anxious to make an application that could bring some resources to these projects. As time is short I would appreciate if I could receive any help with my application, if this is possible.

A8. We are not legally able to assist potential applicants as they prepare their application beyond the information provided at <http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/AID/OM/SOU/674-04-008/listing.html> and at <http://pretoria.usembassy.gov/wwwh aids.html>.

Q9. A quick question on PEPFAR. We wish to hand deliver our application to the US embassy. Is it okay to do so or should it be sent to the PO Box number? A staff member is planning to drop it off tomorrow.

A9. Hand delivery of the application is fine. Be sure the person you give it to at the front desk knows to deliver it to the Office of International Health Room 168, not the Health Clinic.

IV. Rate of Exchange

Q1. What is the rate of the rand to dollar exchange rate?

A1. As provided in the guidelines attached to the letter inviting full applications for the initial round, the exchange rate is \$1=R6.5. In subsequent rounds this exchange rate may change and be specified in letters inviting the submission of full proposals.

V. Indirect Cost Rate and Direct Charge

Q1- Would you know if indirect costs apply to a US Organization operating locally?

Q2. Our organization is the lead applicant of the Project - and the main implementing organization, a registered non-profit organization in South Africa, but does not have a negotiated NICRA rate, as it is not yet registered with USAID. My question is, if you have got any guidelines in regards to how we should reflect indirect costs in the budget in the full proposal?

A1&2. Administrative Costs or Indirect costs are not permitted for local NGOs for direct awards or sub awards. As provided in the instructions, applicants should direct charge such costs. US organizations may include indirect costs in accordance the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) in its budget.

VI. Drugs and Purchase

Q1. Is it possible to write into the budget a purchase of ARVS for 6 months until government roll-out begins?

A1. If your project will require the provision of antiretroviral and/or other drugs and you do not have another source for the supply of these drugs, you may include their purchase, distribution and management in your budget. The current guidance is that all drugs used in Emergency Plan-supported programs should be proven safe and effective and produced in keeping with the highest standards of quality assurance. Each drug also should be fully approved for the proposed use by a stringent regulatory authority. Eventually there may be a mechanism developed to assist with drug purchasing and supply but at present no such mechanism exists to support the Emergency Plan.

Q2. What are the guidelines/policies for drug procurement? I have been unable to find them on the website. Is there any specific information that we should include in our description of our approach to drug procurement and distribution?

A2. Drug procurement must be consistent with U.S. policy and international law. We are sorry that we do not have further specific guidance on this issue at this time, other than that included in the above response. We are anticipating further guidance and will post it on this website as soon as we receive it.

VII. Sub Awards

Q1. Can service providers who we intend to contract out for specified services be considered sub-awardees?

A1. Yes.

Q2. Our organization (US based NGO, registered with USAID) is one of the partners in the project - and part of the budget funds will be directed to their radio equipment, production fees etc, - as it is stated in the Concept Paper.

- Would they be considered as a local Partner (NGO) to be sub-contracted by our organization? (in case of a successful received full proposal)

A2. It appears from the question that the US based NGO will actually be sub-contracted by a local NGO, not vice versa. The local NGO would be the Prime awardee.

VIII. Application Preparation

Q1. The cover letter states we should submit 1 original and 2 copies of the cost proposal. In the guidelines under VII. Costs it says to submit the budget as an annex. Is the cost proposal the matter (form SF424 and assurances) included in PHS 5161? Or is the budget annex to be submitted as this cost proposal, 1 original and 2 copies.

A1. All applications must be prepared to respond in accordance with the guidance provided as an attachment to the letter of invitation to submit a full application and the guidance provided in the APS. Applicants are required to submit the budget as an annex to the full application.

Q2. Would the administrative contact be the person that signs the grant?

A.2. The individual with authority to commit and negotiate on behalf of the organization would sign the grant award document.

Q3. Is there only one applicant that should be named as the applicant? How is the applicant different from administrative contact?

A3. Applicant means – The organization applying for a Grant.

Q4. Can you give specific examples of the documentation that you are looking for that would verify efforts accomplished? (final evaluations, letters of commendation)

A4. Evidence of the quality of your past performance from a prior funding body; evidence of having successfully implemented a similar type of project in the past; descriptions of technical, administrative and financial management successes; achieved past results and similar documentation will help verify accomplishments. As in all cases, applicants are encouraged to respond specifically to guidance provided when they are invited to submit full applications.

Q5. Should the budget be included in a separate cost proposal or is it an annex of the actual technical proposal in which case we would make 9 copies of the entire document?

A5. Applicants are encouraged to respond to the request to submit their application in accordance with the guidance provided in or with the letter of invitation to submit a full proposal. The cost proposal should be a separate document.

